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<b>Notice of Allowability</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/626,815	ICHIKAWA ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Sheela C. Chawan	2624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1.  This communication is responsive to 7/24/03.
2.  The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-19.
3.  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a)  All    b)  Some\*    c)  None    of the:
    1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4.  A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5.  CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
  - (a)  including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
    - 1)  hereto or 2)  to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b)  including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6.  DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

#### Attachment(s)

1.  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2.  Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3.  Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),  
Paper No./Mail Date 7/24/03
4.  Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit  
of Biological Material
5.  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6.  Interview Summary (PTO-413),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
7.  Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8.  Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9.  Other \_\_\_\_\_.

***DETAILED ACTION***

***Priority***

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

***Information Disclosure Statement***

2. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 7/24/03 has been considered by the examiner.

***Drawings***

3. Drawings filed on June 4, 2002 have been approved by Examiner.

***Reason For Allowance***

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 1-19 are allowed.

For Independent claims 1, 15 and 18, the prior art on record, fails to teach or fairly suggest, singly or in combination, an image matching method of detecting an approximate region approximated to a predetermined template image from an input image among other things, comprising steps of: detecting a first axis/first section including region corresponding to the approximate region in a direction of the first axis representing a pixel value input signal; detecting a second axis/first section including a region corresponding to the approximate region in a direction of the second axis based on a second template signal, representing a pixel value of the template image projected on the second axis, and also based on the second input signal; generating a third input signal representing a pixel value of a candidate region image in the input image

specified by first axis/first section and the second axis/first section projected on first axis; and detecting a first axis/second section including a region corresponding to the approximate region first axis based on the first template signal and the third input signal . The closest prior art, Imai (US. 5,661,548) discloses projection exposure method and apparatus including a changing system for changing the reference image-formation position used to generate a focus signal. Shishido et al., (US. 6,865,288) discloses patent inspection method and apparatus. Imai (US. 6,327,025 B1) discloses Projection exposure apparatus for transferring mask. Each of the above references either singularly or in combination, fail to anticipate or render the above limitation obvious.

5. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted on later than the payment of the issue fee and to avoid processing delays should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled, comments on statement of reasons for allowance.

***Other prior art cited***

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Schorcht et al.,( US.4,496,970) discloses arrangement for the automatic adjustment of at least one object .

Petry,III et al., (US.5, 859,923) discloses mark quality inspection apparatus and method .

Loce et al., (US. 5, 758, 034) discloses video path architecture including logic filters for resolution conversion of digital images .

Girmay et al., (US. 5, 862, 305) discloses logic filters for resolution conversion of digital images.

***Contact Information***

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sheila C Chowan whose telephone number is. 571-272-7446. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 7.30 - 6.00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew Bella reached on 571-272-7778. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sheila Chowan  
Patent Examiner  
Group Art Unit 2624  
August 14, 2006

*Sheila Chowan*  
SHEELA CHAWAN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER